

To: Office of Planning and Research
PO Box 3044
1400 Tenth Street, Room 113
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

From: California Energy Commission
715 P Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

Project Applicant: Alliance for Sustainable Energy, LLC

Project Title: A Reference Floating HVDC Substation Design for California

Project Location:

Address	City	County
19001 W. 119th Ave	Arvada 80007	Jefferson, CO
1 Harpst St	Arcata 95521	Humboldt
3131 Camino Del Rio N Ste 150	San Diego 92108	San Diego

Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project:

This project will develop a reference floating high voltage direct current (HVDC) substation design for California's floating offshore wind farms, enabling the HVDC benefits of lowering ratepayer costs associated with transmission of offshore wind generation to shore, improving electrical efficiency, and supporting grid stability and reliability. The open-source design process will broadly explore different options for the substation's subsystems (mooring lines, power cables, platform structure, and electrical equipment) and identify an optimal design tailored for California's offshore conditions.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project:

California Energy Commission

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project:

Alliance for Sustainable Energy, LLC

Exempt Status: (check one)

- ☐ Ministerial Exemption (Pub. Resources Code § 21080(b)(1); Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 15268);
- ☐ Declared Emergency (Pub. Resources Code § 21080(b)(3); Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 15269(a));
- ☐ Emergency Project (Pub. Resources Code § 21080(b)(4); Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 15269(b)(c));
- ☒ Categorical Exemption. State type and section number
Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 15301 ; Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 15306
- ☒ Statutory Exemptions. State code number. PRC §§ 21102, 21150; CCR., tit. 14, § 15262
- ☐ Common Sense Exemption. (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 15061(b)(3))

Reasons why project is exempt:

California Code of Regulations, title 14, section 15306, Information Collection, provides that projects which consist of basic data collection, research, experimental management, and resource evaluation activities which do not result in a serious or major disturbance to an environmental resource are categorically exempt from the provisions of CEQA. This project involves a paper design and digital modeling of a concept floating high voltage direct current substation for floating offshore wind. The design and modeling of the substation will involve basic data collection, research, and modeling at an existing national lab facility in Colorado, existing commercial office buildings, and university campus buildings located in California. Therefore, the project is exempt from the provisions of CEQA under section 15306.

Authority cited: Sections 21083 and 21110, Public Resources Code. Reference: Sections 21108, 21152, and 21152.1, Public Resources Code.

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The grant project does not include any in-ocean-water testing of substation designs, mooring, or any other equipment. The project does not include any environmental sampling (e.g., water or biota sampling, geotechnical drilling) in the environment, including in the ocean and ocean floor. This grant involves only feasibility or planning studies for possible future actions that appropriate agencies boards, or commissions have not approved, adopted, or funded. Environmental factors of this research have been considered. Therefore, the project is exempt from CEQA under the statutory exemption, Cal. Code Regs., tit 14, Section 15262, Feasibility and Planning Studies.

California Code of Regulations, title 14, section 15301, Existing Facilities, provides an exemption from CEQA for the operation, repair, maintenance, permitting, leasing, licensing, or minor alteration of existing structures, facilities, mechanical equipment or topographical features involving negligible or no expansion of use beyond that existing. This project will conduct research, paper studies, and computer modeling within already existing research, office, and laboratory facilities. There will be negligible or no expansion of existing use. Therefore, the project falls within section 15301 and will not have a significant effect on the environment.

This project does not involve impacts on any particularly sensitive environment; does not involve any cumulative impacts of successive projects of the same type in the same place that might be considered significant; does not involve unusual circumstances that might have a significant effect on the environment; will not result in damage to scenic resources within a highway officially designated as a state scenic highway; the project site is not included on any list compiled pursuant to Government Code section 65962.5; and the project will not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource. Therefore, none of the exceptions to categorical exemptions listed in CEQA Guidelines section 15300.2 apply, and this project will not have a significant effect on the environment.

Public Lead Agency

Contact Person: Nathan Lubega **Area code/Telephone/Ext:** (916) 633-0048

If filed by applicant:

1. Attach certified document of exemption finding.
2. Has a Notice of Exemption been filed by the public agency approving the project? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Signature: Nathan Lubega **Date:** 12/5/2025 **Title:** EGSS I

☒ **Signed by Public Agency**

☐ **Signed by Applicant**

Date received for filing at OPR: _____